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C O N F I D E N T I A L VATICAN 000784

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR: EUR (BRADKE), EUR/WE (MENNUTI, KILNER); EB
(GADSDEN), AF (KANSTEINER)

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SUBJECT: BIWEEKLY ACTIVITIES REPORT JANUARY 14-25, 2002

CLASSIFIED BY: CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR JIM NICHOLSON,
REASON E.O. 1295 8 1.5 (B,D).

1. (C) THIS CABLE REPORTS ON EMBASSY VATICAN'S BIWEEKLY ACTIVITIES FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 30-FEBRUARY 14, 2002. IT IS INTENDED TO SUMMARIZE, BUT NOT EXHAUSTIVELY REPORT, OUR ACTIVITIES DURING THE PREVIOUS TWO WEEKS. COVERED IN THIS CABLE ARE:

-- AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES COMMERCIAL ADVOCACY WITH ACOUSTIGUIDES
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-- AMBASSADOR TALKS ZIMBABWE BACK-CHANNEL WITH JESUITS FOR AF A/S

-- EMBASSY MEETINGS ON OUR PROPOSED ANTI-TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE

-- POLOFFS DISCUSS BIOTECH APPROACH TO VATICAN WITH EMBASSY COLLEAGUES

-- AMBASSADOR AT HOSTS DINNER FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY EXPERT PRAKASH

-- REPORTING ON: ASSISI DAY OF PRAYER FOR PEACE, U.S.-VATICAN BILATERAL ISSUES, COLOMBIA PEACE, POPE'S BULGARIA TRIP, EMBASSY VATICAN ANTI-TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE, CHINESE CATHOLICS REPRESSED, UN ANTI-CLONING CONVENTION.

2. (U) AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES COMMERCIAL ADVOCACY WITH ACOUSTIGUIDES: AMBASSADOR AND POLOFF MET 01/30 WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE U.S. COMPANY ACOUSTIGUIDES ABOUT POSSIBLE COMMERCIAL ADVOCACY TO PLACE THEIR GUIDES IN THE VATICAN MUSEUMS. WE REFERRED THEM TO DEPT OF COMMERCE FOR FORMAL ADVOCACY REQUEST; POLOFF, WITH FCS ROME AUTHORIZATION, ACCOMPANIED THEM TO THEIR PRESENTATION TO VATICAN MUSEUM OFFICIALS.

3. (C) AMBASSADOR TALKS ZIMBABWE BACK-CHANNEL WITH JESUITS FOR AF A/S: AMBASSADOR 02/01 AT BEHEST OF A/S KANSTEINER EXPLORED INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING POSSIBLE BACK-CHANNEL COMMUNICATION WITH ZIMBABWE PRESIDENT MUGABE ON ACCOUNT OF MUGABE'S JESUIT EDUCATION.

4. (U) EMBASSY MEETINGS ON OUR PROPOSED ANTI-TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE: VATICAN 700 REPORTS OUR EFFORTS, UP TO FEBRUARY 11, TO ORGANIZE A MAY, 2002 CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS DIMENSIONS OF THE PROBLEM OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS.
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SINCE FEB. 11 WE HAVE SURVEYED THE SPACE OFFERED BY THE PONTIFICAL GREGORIAN UNIVERSITY AND MADE PROGRESS SECURING FUNDING FOR THE CONFERENCE FROM OTHER HOLY SEE ACCREDITED EMBASSIES. DCM ALSO HOSTED LUNCH WITH KEY EUROPEAN DCMS, WHO AGREED TO NOMINATE SPEAKER CANDIDATES ASAP.

5. (SBU) POLOFFS DISCUSS BIOTECH APPROACH TO VATICAN WITH EMBASSY COUNTERPARTS: POLOFFS HOSTED 02/08 LUNCH WITH COUNTERPARTS FROM ARGENTINA, TAIWAN, AND INDONESIA EMBASSIES TO THE HOLY SEE TO DISCUSS OPENING DIALOGUE WITH VATICAN ON BENEFITS OF BIOTECHNOLOGY IN AGRICULTURE. ALL WERE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE IDEA, BELIEVING THAT THE VATICAN CAN MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF BIOTECH.

6. (U) AMBASSADOR AT HOSTS DINNER FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY EXPERT PRAKASH: AMBASSADOR HOSTED DINNER EVENING OF 2/14 FOR VISITING BIOTECH EXPERT DR. C.S. PRAKASH. DINNER EXPOSED SENIOR VATICAN DECISION-MAKERS INCLUDING FM TAURAN AND CARDINAL SCHOTTE (OF GENERAL SYNOD OF BISHOPS) TO THE "GOOD NEWS" ON BIOTECH.

7. (C) EMBASSY REPORTING: DURING THE PERIOD EMBASSY REPORTED ON: THE POPE'S EXCEPTIONAL INTER-RELIGIOUS DAY OF PRAYER FOR PEACE AT ASSISI (VATICAN 521), U.S.-VATICAN BILATERAL ISSUES (VATICAN 495), COLOMBIA PEACE (VATICAN 578), POPE'S BULGARIA TRIP AND OUTREACH TO THE ORTHODOX (VATICAN 561), EMBASSY VATICAN ANTI-TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE UPDATE (VATICAN 700), CHINESE CATHOLICS REPRESSED (VATICAN 579), UN ANTI-CLONING CONVENTION (VATICAN 699).
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